

Script 1

Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?

This is a question which comes up in all job interviews. Your employer is checking your loyalty and commitment to the firm.

Give an answer which indicates a slow and steady career progression within the company.

An ideal in answer for a technical project manager could be as follows:

I hope to still be a project manager but more senior, and with more experience working on a more diverse range of IT projects. My long-distance plan is to ultimately become an expert in Agile Development and transition into a Scrum master and give mentorship to my scrum team and the other project managers.

For more project management job interview tips check out the link onscreen and below.

Good luck,

Script 2

What are your strengths?

This is a question which comes up in all job interviews. The best way to answer this is to pick a strength which is a requirement for the job.

An ideal in answer for a technical project manager or business analyst could be as follows:

I have a natural ability to communicate effectively with all members of staff in a way they understand. For example I'm able to speak to the stakeholder or client in a non-technical lingo. Whereas I'm able to draw on my technical background and communicate at a more detailed level with the software developers; when resolving issues I am able to ask the technical team the right probing questions to help steer the project back on track.

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Good luck,

Script 3

What is your biggest weakness?

This is a question which comes up in all job interviews. Do not answer with a cliché response like “I work too hard” or “I’m a perfectionist”.

The best way to answer this is to select a weakness which isn’t a critical skill necessary for the job and then counter act it with a positive step you’ve taken to solve the problem.

An ideal answer for project management role is as follows:

In the past I used to struggle slightly with public speaking. A few years ago I went on an acting course where I built my self confidence. At my last workplace I did several presentations and no longer felt nervous and received lots positive feedback from colleagues and management.

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Good luck,

Script 4

Why do you want to work here?

This is a question which comes up in all job interviews. Avoid answers like “I need a job” or “I need more money” or any response which benefits you.

The employer is trying to see how well you will integrate into the culture of the workplace.

I recommend you research the company’s website and publications first and find something unique which has compelled you to apply that fits directly with your personal beliefs, values or expertise.

A good answer could be:

I heard about your charity division which trains disadvantage kids into a career in software development. I personally give back to my local community too by volunteering my time to teach kids to code. In a way I felt your company and I share the same fundamental goals and values.

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Good luck,

Script 5

Why do you want to work here? – Part 2

Try to avoid saying that you need a job, or that you need the money, or anything that makes you look desperate.

The more you know about the company the easier it will be to answer the question. This is your opportunity to say something positive and admirable about the company that has compelled you to apply.

This can be something you admire about the company. For example, the work culture, products or services. If you're still struggling take a look at the company's website for achievements and draw on it as a reason you applied.

For a position in Project Management a good answer could be:

Your company supports many social causes, and this is something I respect. Last year your company raised 5-million pound for a children's charity. I'm personally involved in many social causes so in a way I feel our ethics are aligned.

Outside of work, I would love to use my Project Management experience to help your company coordinate next year's fundraiser.

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Good luck,

Script 6

Have you ever worked as a Project Manager at a Digital Agency?

If you're applying for a Digital Project Manager and you have limited experience an ideal answer could be as follows:

Project Management is my core competency and as a hobby I occasionally set myself personal projects. I hand code demo websites to sharpen my skills in HTML, CSS and Java Script.

I've always kept up-to-date with the changes in the web development industry too. When the industry started to move away from hand-coding to Content Management Systems I taught myself Drupal and Word Press. I'm also capable of setting-up dedicated web servers and configuring SQL databases.

This mean I can better communicate with the Web Development Team at a technical level and give more detailed explanations to the stakeholders.

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Good luck,

Script 7

Why did you leave your last job as self-employed?

When you're self-employed things are volatile, sales can suddenly fall and it's difficult to predict your financial situation. I'm at the point in my life where I rather constancy and stability which a traditional job provides.

Also I want to focus exclusively on my passion and expertise, which is working on IT Projects.

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Script 8

Why are you leaving your job?

Don't say anything negative about your previous or current company, manager or co-workers. A negative response will make the hiring manager think you'll speak badly about them too. Equally, don't mention anything related to being under-paid, over-worked, under-appreciated, or give the impression that you're job-hopping.

The best approach is to say something concise and positive. For a Project Manager Job a good response could be:

I really enjoyed working at my current company, for the last four-years I have delivered multiple projects from procurement to deployment, and I have developed many strong business relationships. I am looking for more management responsibility, but the opportunity for growth in this area is limited. I feel leaving my job is the next step to achieving my goal.

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Good luck,

Script 9

What are you looking for in a job?

To answer this successfully you need to understand the company well enough to link the job's positive qualities to your own personal criteria.

Be careful not to say things which are inaccurate or not part of the job specification otherwise your answer could be used against you as ammunition.

For example, it's counter-productive to say you are looking for a role balancing the project budget if the job description doesn't involve any financial responsibility. Equally, don't say you want to progress to a programme Manager or Director because those opportunities are not common, unless the job description says-so.

A good answer could be:

I want to be part of a vibrant team whom I have a good synergy with. This makes it easier to share expertise and resources to achieve a common deliverable.

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Good luck,

Script 10

What is your favourite project management methodology?

In this question the interviewer is trying to test your knowledge of the many industry standard methodologies and their advantages & disadvantages, and whether you're able to apply the right methodology for the given project.

The best way to answer it is to pick two opposing methodologies which you've used when delivering a project. Then state a positive attribute of both methodologies whilst placing a greater positive emphasis on the favourite methodology of the two.

For example for a project manager delivering an IT project a good answer could be:

I like the structured approach and the sense of control I get with the waterfall methodology, however in this industry changes to the specification are sudden so an iterative methodology like Agile is my favourite for technology projects.

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Good luck,

Script 11

How do you keep your team motivated on a project?

In this question the hiring manager is trying to find out the value you place on a motivated team and how you keep the morale high on any given project.

A good answer could be:

I'm a believer that a motivated team can facilitate a successful project. On my last project I would debrief with my team at the end of the day. I try not to dwell on the tasks that went wrong and only mention it constructively as an area for improvement. To keep spirits high I would then turn the focus to the activities that went well and thank my team for their contributions. I also recognised and praised any stand-out co-workers whom have gone above and beyond.

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Good luck,

Script 12

How to Answer: What motivates you?

Avoid an answer that involves money, an exception is sales where a key motivating factor could be exceeding sales targets and getting commissions.

Analyse the job description for keywords and tell a story around it. For example the job description for a project manager vacancy may require experience dealing with suppliers.

A good answer could be as follows:

I am motivated by the recognition I get from my stakeholders whenever I successfully deliver. In my last position I was involved in the procurement process to select a supplier to develop a software application. The quotes were out of budget, but this only motivated me to persevere until I found a supplier in Bulgaria whom who met our requirements. The project was a success and my managing Director congratulated me on successfully brokering the deal.

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Good luck,

Script 13

How to explain gaps in employment on your CV?

The interviewer is checking to see that it's not because you are unemployable. The best way to answer this question is to be truthful. Whether it's a career break to raise children or looking after a sick relative, travelling the world or you returned to university, answer with honesty. Practice a short-concise response without over indulging personal issues which could derail the interview.

A good answer could be:

I returned to university to complete my Master's degree in Project Management and I passed with a distinction. It's something I been wanted to accomplish for a while. Now that the course is complete I am focused on my career; refreshed and eager to put my knowledge into practice.

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Good luck,

Script 14

Do you prefer to work independently or in a team?

The hiring manager wants know if you're dynamic enough to work both in a team and alone.

It's a mistake to exaggerate one preference over the other. If your answer leans too heavily on working alone the hiring manager may become concerned that you won't get along with your colleagues. Lean too heavily on teamwork and you may come across as too reliant on others to get things done.

Answer with balance, emphasise your adaptability to exercise both your interpersonal skills and discipline for solitary depending on the given task.

A good answer for a project manager position could be:

On my last project it was typical for me to write the project mandate document in isolation. However the draft document was peer reviewed by the wider team and myself.

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Good luck,

Script 15

What is your greatest accomplishment at work?

The hiring manager wants to know the largest and most significant project you've delivered successfully.

Avoid personal accomplishments, as a last resort use a notable educational achievement like completing a Masters or PhD. But a work related answer is best.

Take time and think back over your career, and give an example of a specific significant project which had a positive and impactful outcome.

A good answer for a Project Manager position could be:

At my last job I simultaneously undertook three projects across the continents of Europe, Asia and America. Despite the geographical challenges the projects were a success and our revenue has since increased 150% since last year. Because of this accomplishment I was offered a position sitting on the board of directors.

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Script 16:

What project management software can you use?

There are numerous project management applications in the marketplace and the hiring manager is trying to find out whether you are competent using at least one.

Try to demonstrate an awareness of the alternative applications, and an eagerness to learn how to use it, if necessary.

A good answer could be:

I am very familiar with Microsoft Project and its advanced features. I understand that in the software development industry JIRA is preferred because it combines project management with bug tracking; and there is also a movement towards BASECAMP because it allows the teams to collaborate.

I am open to undergo further training to learn an alternative project management application and I am confident that my experience in Microsoft Project will help me to pick it up quickly.

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Script 17

Describe a time you lead your team by example?

In this question the interviewer wants to know if you're committed enough to roll-up your sleeves and get stuck-in with your team during exceptional circumstances.

Give a specific example where you went above and beyond to rescue a project by supporting your team's activities.

A good answer could be:

At my last job I was a manager of a team of software developers. Our biggest client requested a demonstration of the product but the application was still incomplete; and our director requested that my team works overnight to meet the deadline.

As their manager I feel no task is beneath me, so I stayed behind too and assisted with the coding. We didn't get any sleep but it was worth it as the client loved the finish product.

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Script 18:

How did you hear about this position?

The hiring manager wants to know the approach you took to find the vacancy. If a current or ex-employee told you about the position avoid mentioning their name, because they may have left the company on bad terms. Also the hiring manager may feel pressured into consider you over better candidates.

Find a publication which the company has featured in, and base your answer around that.

For a project manager role in the automotive industry a good answer could be:

I've always had a passion for emerging technologies and I'm subscribed to many automotive journals. In last month's addition there was a story about a driverless car developed by your company. Further research into the technology lead me to your website where I came across the open vacancy.

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